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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003156

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LONDON PASS TO AMBASSADOR CROCKER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/18/2017
TAGS: [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY CONTINUES OUTREACH ON PERSONAL SECURITY
DETAIL INCIDENT

REF: A. BAGHDAD 03143
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 03136

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Patricia A. Butenis for reasons 1.4 (b)
) and (d)

CONFIDENTIAL

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Summary

(C) 1. The Embassy continued its official and public outreach today to address Iraqi concerns and calm the waters in the wake of the September 16 incident involving a Blackwater personal security detail. At a press event, Prime Minister Maliki explained that the Joint Commission would review Blackwater operations in Iraq and consider CPA order 17. While noting that Blackwater has made inaccurate statements about the incident, he underscored the need to wait for the final results of the Commission. Given the involvement of the Iraqi police in the incident and the unhelpful statements and actions originating from the MOI, Charge d'Affaires Butenis called on Minister of Interior Bulani to underscore our commitment to working with the GOI to address its concerns and to encourage the MOI to play a more constructive role. While Bulani did not repeat earlier calls for the banning of Blackwater, he emphasized that no one is above the law, and said that Blackwater had been involved in a number of problematic incidents. Tomorrow the Charge will meet with Minister of Defense Abdul Kader Mohammed, who the Prime Minister has named as the Iraqi co-chair of the USG-GOI Joint Commission. Per RSO directive and consistent with a request by PM Maliki, all Blackwater PSD movements are on hold for the next 48 hours.

Regional Security Office Update

(C) 2. The Regional Security Office (RSO) continues to investigate the September 16 incident. RSO personnel will visit the scene of the incident tomorrow. PM Maliki's recommendation that Blackwater continue to stand down for the next 48 hours before resuming operations matches the plan already in place by the RSO, under which all US Mission PSD movements in Baghdad and Hillah are suspended until Friday. Exceptions must be mission-essential movements approved by the RSO. Other Mission PSD (Dyncorp and Triple Canopy) movements in the north and south of Iraq will be limited, mission-essential, and RSO-approved until Friday. Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) which move with the support of the military are operating as usual.

Calming Minister of Interior Bulani

(C) 3. Charge Butenis met with Minister of Interior Jawad Bulani on September 19 to express USG regret for the loss of Iraqi lives and to encourage the MOI to play a more constructive role. Bulani, whose ministry oversees the Iraqi National Police, and an MOI spokesman have been the most outspoken GOI officials, making proclamations that Blackwater's license to operate in Iraq had been revoked. The Charge briefed Bulani on the Secretary's phone call to the Prime Minister, the agreement to form the Joint Commission to review the issue of PSD operations in Iraq, and underscored our desire to do what was possible to avoid this kind of incident again.

(C) 4. Minister Bulani thanked Charge Butenis for her visit and expression of sympathy. He stressed that the Iraqi people must know that there will be no violations of the law, that no one is above the law, and that this cannot be repeated. He underscored that Iraqis need to feel respected and enjoy the ability to move about freely. Charge agreed, noting that the USG investigation was ongoing and no conclusions had been reached. She indicated that compensation to the victims' families was under consideration.

(C) 5. Bulani said the Mansour incident was the 5th or 7th such incident involving Blackwater. Charge asked MOI to pass on any information of these types of actions to the Embassy. Bulani said that the MOI Legal Advisor was following up on the Mansour incident with Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Human Rights counterparts.

(C) 6. In response to the Charge's query on PSDs that worked for the GOI, Bulani mentioned that there were some foreign

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and local companies engaged in that work. In general, these companies were registered, the personnel had badges, and their licenses were renewed on a regular basis. MOI was responsible for the registration, per CPA 17.

Starting Work with Joint Commission Co-Chair and MOD

(C) 7. Following today's meeting with MOI and telephone conversation with NSA Rubaie, the Charge will meet with Minister of Defense Abdul Kader Mohammed tomorrow morning, in his capacity as the newly-designated co-chair of the joint commission and begin discussing the modalities of the commission. NSA Rubaie clarified that the MOD should be our primary POC while he and the Prime Minister are in the United States.

Formation of the Joint Commission

(SBU) 8. National Security Advisor Rubaie followed up yesterday's discussion of the composition of the Joint Commission by providing the Embassy the following list of GOI members:

- Minister of Defense - Abdul Kader Mohammed (co-chair)
- National Police Commander - Major General Hussein al Awadi
- Rusafa Commander - Major General Riayth Jalal
- Karhk Commander - Major General Wajeed
- Ministry of Interior staff - Adnan al Zarfi
- Ministry of State for National Security Affairs staff - Tariq al Baldowi
- Prime Minister's Office staff - Ali Abdul Ameer al Yassari
- National Security Advisor staff - Dr. Riath al Safar

(SBU) 9. The U.S. side will be composed of Embassy and MNF-I

representation:

- Deputy Chief of Mission - Patricia Butenis (co-chair)
- Political-Military Counselor - Ambassador Marcie Ries
- Regional Security Officer - Earl Miller
- Major General Barbero (Deputy Chief of Staff, MNF-I, Stratops)
- Brigadier General Campbell (Deputy Commanding General, 1st Cavalry Division, MNC-I)
- Embassy Legal Advisor - Darin Johnson
- Colonel Mark Martins) Senior Judge Staff Advocate
- Embassy Reporting and Action Officer

MEDIA ANALYSIS

(U) 10. The Embassy Spokesperson participated in MNF-I General Bergner's bi-weekly press conference, which drew heavy attendance from Western, Iraqi, and pan-Arab media. The PSD incident was the central issue, with questions referring to the facts of the incident and the implications of the incident for COM personnel security and movement, as well as the larger issues of USG-affiliated PSD operations in Iraq. Pending Washington's formal announcement of the joint commission, the Spokesperson did not refer specifically to the commission, but noted that we have agreed in our discussions with the GOI to examine both the incident itself and the wider issues surrounding PSD operations.

(U) 11. Prime Minister Maliki referred to the formation of the Joint Commission in his press conference today, discussing its formation and stating that the commission would take CPA order 17 into consideration when looking into Blackwater's presence and work in Iraq. He also stated that inaccurate information had been leaked about the incident, referring to statements made by Blackwater representatives. Maliki mentioned a number of times the importance of waiting for the final results of the Joint Commission.

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